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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Major Dam Upgrade Projects Approved in Latimer and Pontotoc Counties** *Projects valued at \$4.6 million*

**STILLWATER, Okla., Oct. 20, 2016**—USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has authorized projects to upgrade [high hazard flood control dams](#) in Latimer and Pontotoc Counties. Both dams protect several homes, businesses and county roads downstream. The combined cost of the projects is \$4.6 million.

A dam classification of high hazard means in the unlikely event of a dam failure, there is a potential for loss of life. This is the case for both dams to be upgraded.

“We’re pleased to announce these dam upgrade projects both for the obvious downstream flood control benefits they provide, as well as the positive economic benefit the construction will have in these communities,” said April Burns, Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources.

Flood control dam upgrade projects are funded through the Watershed Rehabilitation Program. This program allows for a cost-share partnership between NRCS and local sponsors. The Oklahoma Conservation Commission, Latimer County Conservation District and Pontotoc County Conservation District are the local sponsors for these projects. NRCS will fund \$2,057,700 for the Latimer County project and state partners will fund \$852,100. For the Pontotoc County project, NRCS will fund \$1,254,200 and state partners will fund \$507,800.

As part of the upgrades, the dams’ principal spillways and inlet structures will be replaced or modified and the heights of the dams will be raised to allow them to capture more floodwater.

Upon completion of the upgrades, the dams will have an additional 100 years life. The dams were originally designed for a 50 year life.

### **September Flood Control Benefits**

For the month of September 2016, Oklahoma’s 2,107 flood control dams prevented \$16.8 million in damage to property downstream. The total damage prevented for 2016 so far is estimated to be \$120 million.

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